

Story 2191 1999 Tape 15)

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Location: Akkent town, Çal  
kaza, Denizli  
Province

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Respective Sale Prices for a Parrot and  
for Nasreddin Hoca's<sup>1</sup> Turkey

One day Nasreddin Hoca went to a marketplace where he saw a man holding up a bird for sale. The man was asking for 25 gold liras for that bird. Surprised to hear such a price asked for any bird, Hoca edged closer to the seller and said, "Brother, why are you asking for so much gold for a bird?"

man answered, "My Hoca, this is no ordinary kind of bird. It is a parrot

"What of that?" asked Hoca

"A parrot can speak--just like a human being."

"Oh-h-h-h, is that so?" asked Hoca. The preacher left the marketplace immediately and returned soon afterwards with one of his turkeys. Then he began shouting,

<sup>1</sup>A hoca is the preacher and religious leader of a Muslim community. In pre-Republican times he was also a teacher, for education was then the responsibility of the clergy. In the Republic schoolteachers are required to have secular rather than religious training--though occasionally a teacher or professor may still, for sentimental reasons, be called hoca. Nasreddin Hoca has for centuries been the most beloved comic folk character of the Turks.

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"A turkey for sale! A turkey for sale for just 50 gold liras.

People who heard that wondered if Hoca had lost his mind. They asked, "Hoca, how could a turkey be worth so much money?"

Nasreddin Hoca responded, "Have you seen the man selling a parrot?"

"Yes, we saw him."

"And how much was he asking for that parrot?"

"He was asking 25 gold liras."

"What is so special about that bird? Do you know?" asked Hoca.

They all said, "Yes, that bird can speak like a human being."

Nasreddin Hoca responded, "His bird may be able to speak like a human being but my turkey is superior, for it can think like a human being."

Everyone was puzzled by that remark. They were so puzzled that they could not think of anything else to ask.